

## PART IV

## THE PATTERN OF AGRICULTURE

Farms - Number and Size

The number of farms in Pend Oreille County has steadily decreased since 1935 when there were 686 units. The latest Census of Agriculture (1959) counted 366 farms in the county. This was 95 less than enumerated in 1954. However, the Census definition of a farm in 1959 was more restrictive than in 1954. In Pend Oreille County, the decrease in the number of farms which resulted from the change in farm definition was 58, accounting for 64 percent of the 95 unit difference noted between the two Census years. In 1959, Pend Oreille County ranked twenty-eighth in the state in the number of farms.

With the decrease in number of farms since 1920, the trend in average size of farms in Pend Oreille County has been upward. The move toward larger farm units has been the result of several practices common among the modern farmers. Many smaller farms have been purchased or leased and consolidated with larger units. Successful livestock farmers have added range and forest land to their holdings in order to increase the size of their herds. Increased use of machinery in hay and grain farming has enabled individual farmers to purchase, lease and manage more cropland.

Table 9. Farms, Number and Average Size, Land in Farms  
Pend Oreille County, 1920-1959

Year	Total Farms in the County	Average size of farms in the County (acres)	Total County Area in Farms (acres)	Percent of County area in Farms
1920	586	203.9	119,496	13.3
1925	505	171.6	86,680	9.6
1930	613	187.0	114,631	12.7
1940	657	176.8	116,146	12.9
1945	602	217.4	130,856	14.5
1950	500	271.3	135,628	15.1
1954	461	289.0	133,213	14.8
1959	366	339.5	124,239	13.8

Source: U. S. Census of Agriculture.

Census of Agriculture data over the years show that the percent of Pend Oreille County area in farms increased during the quarter century between 1925 and 1950. Since 1950, however, total farm acreage has decreased from 135,628 acres to 124,239 acres. In 1959, Pend Oreille County ranked twenty-sixth among the 39 counties of Washington in land in farms.

In 1959, about 18 percent of the farms in Pend Oreille County were over 500 acres each. Only 1.4 percent were under 10 acres. The decrease in number of farms between 1954 and 1959 occurred at all levels of operations from those under 10 acres to farms over 500 acres. Farms under 10 acres numbered 18 in 1954 whereas only 5 were enumerated in 1959. This is indicative of the trend to consolidate the smaller, less efficient farms, particularly those under 10 acres, into larger

units. It should also be noted that part of the decrease in the number of small farms resulted from the change in the 1959 Census definition of a farm.

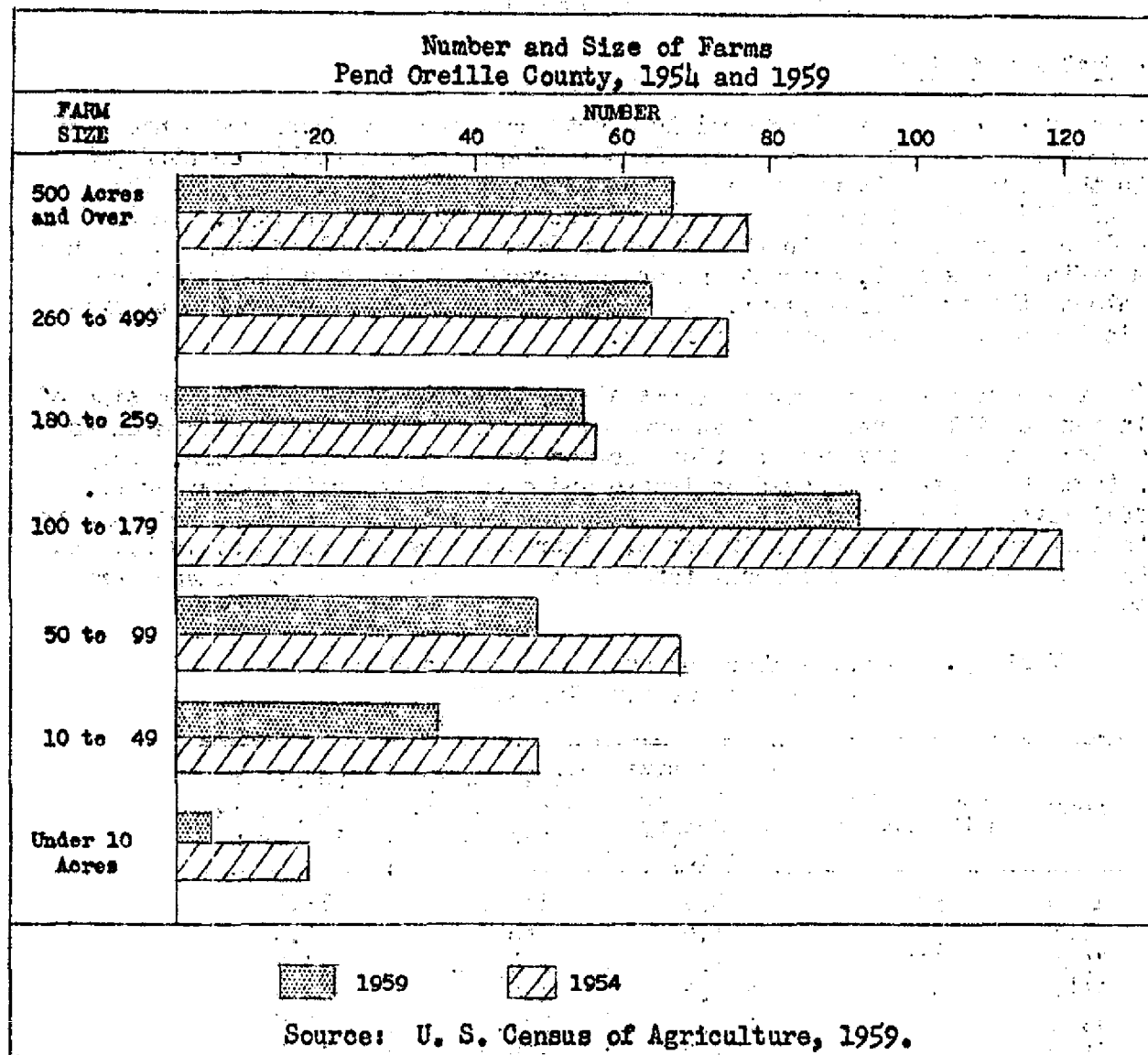


Figure 6. Number and Size of Pend Oreille County Farms, 1954 and 1959.

#### Types of Farms

Livestock and dairy farms predominate in Pend Oreille County agriculture. According to the Census of Agriculture, the most common type of operation in 1959 was livestock farms other than poultry and dairy. These numbered 100, accounting for over 26 percent of all Pend Oreille County farms. Livestock farms were the only type to increase in numbers during the five years between 1954 and 1959. In 1954, they numbered 80. Next in numbers in 1959 were dairy farms which added up to 57 units, 15 percent of the total farm figure. General farms were third, numbering 13. The general category included farms which grew only hay or grass for silage or which received cash income from three or more sources and did not meet the criteria for any one type. Only one farm was classified as a cash grain field crop farm in 1959. Finally, 209 or 55 percent of the county farms in 1959 were classified as miscellaneous by the Census. This category included farms raising

nursery and greenhouse products, forest products, mules, horses, colts and ponies. Also included were all institutional farms and farms on Indian reservations. There were no farms specializing in fruit, nuts, vegetables or poultry in the county in 1959.

Table 10. Types of Farms, Pend Oreille County, 1959

Type of Farm	Estimated Number of Farms	Percent of all farms in the county	
		1954	1959
Total farms in county .....	380	100.0	100.0
Field crop farms .....	1	4.5	0.26
Cash-grain .....	1	4.5	0.26
Other field-crop .....	--	--	--
Vegetable farms .....	--	--	--
Fruit-and-nut farms .....	--	--	--
Poultry farms .....	--	--	--
Dairy farms .....	57	14.3	15.00
Livestock farms other than poultry and dairy	100	17.3	26.31
General farms .....	13	4.8	3.42
Miscellaneous and unclassified farms .....	209	59.1	55.00

Source: U. S. Census of Agriculture.

#### Farm Residence and Operation

Pend Oreille County agriculture is characterized by a large proportion of operators residing on farms and dividing their labor between agriculture and off-farm work. Opportunities in nonfarm employment are available in local forest industries or in construction and other seasonal occupations. In 1959, over 60 percent of the farm operators reported having worked off their farms. A little over half of the operators worked off their farms more than 100 days. Nearly 60 percent of the farm operators and their families gained more cash income from off-farm work than they received from farm products marketed during the year.

The majority of Pend Oreille County farmers live on the farms they operate. Farmers living on the farms under their operation numbered 349 in 1959. Only 67 farmers reported not residing on farm operated.

#### Farmland Utilization

Land devoted to pastures form the largest part of Pend Oreille County's total farmland acreage. In 1959, 46,127 acres or 37 percent of the county farm area of 124,239 acres was in woodland pasture. Also in 1959, 6,995 acres of cropland were used for pasture. Other pastures in the county in that year amounted to 8,619 acres. These included non-crop open or brush pasture and cut-over or deforested land used for pasture. All pastures in the county, therefore, totaled 61,741 acres, constituting nearly half of Pend Oreille's farmland in 1959. A large segment of the county's farm acreage is also in woodlands. In 1959, farm woodland covered 33,608 acres which represented 27 percent of the total county farm acreage. Harvested cropland ranked third among the major farmland utilization in 1959 with a total of 16,317 acres. Summerfallow or idle cropland amounted to 7,829 acres. Finally, 4,744 farm acres were in house lots, roads, wasteland, etc. in 1959.

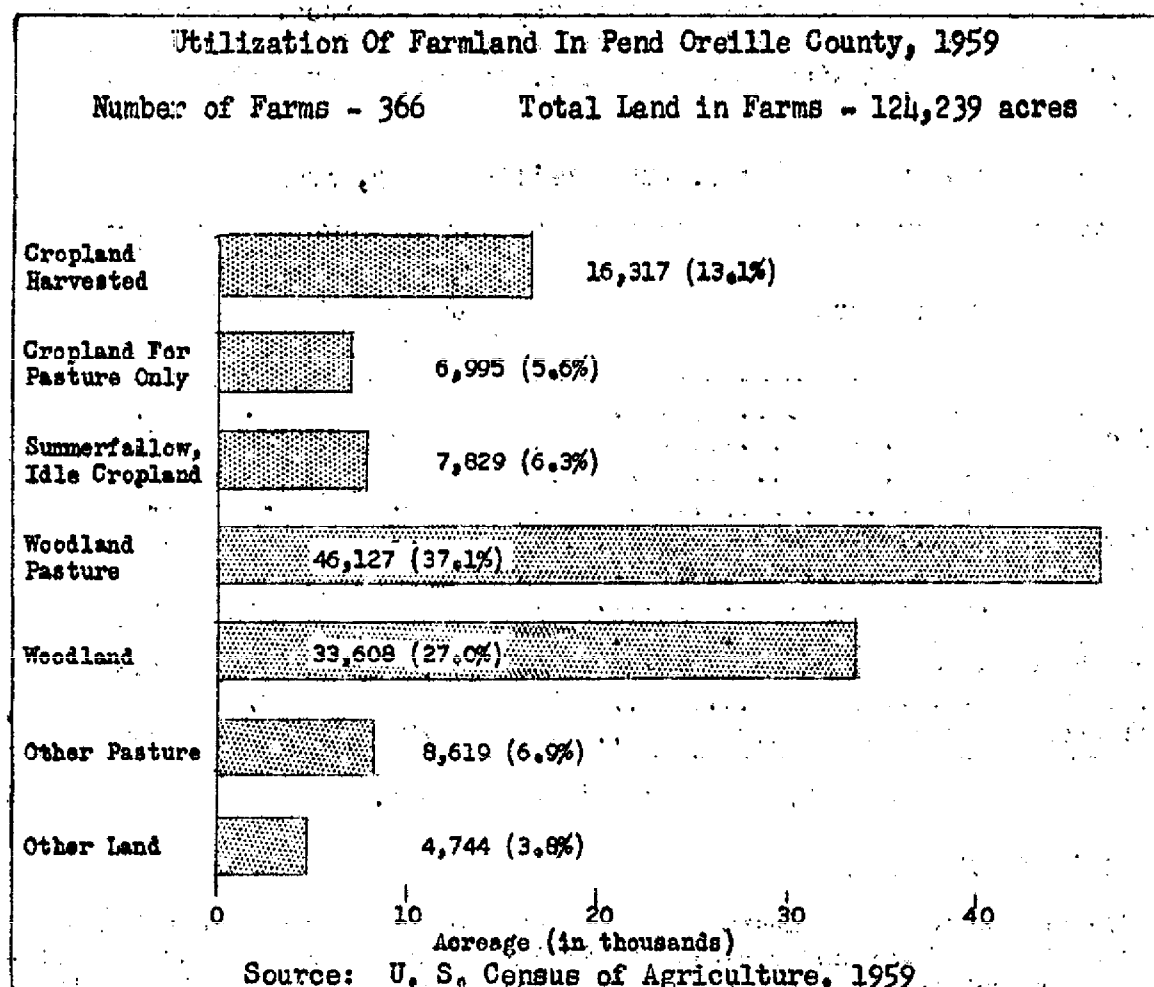


Figure 7. Utilization of Farmland in Pend Oreille County, 1959

### Farm Values

The value of farmlands and buildings in Pend Oreille County has greatly increased since 1920. Values decreased during the 1920's and 1930's but have increased nearly seven and one-half times since 1940. Value of farmland and buildings averaged \$3,390 per farm in 1940 in contrast to \$25,140 per farm in 1959. Land value per acre during the same period rose from \$19 to about \$67. The increase in farm values has resulted from the general rise of real estate values in Washington accompanied by investments in new buildings, land clearing and farm improvements.

Table 11. Value of Farm Land and Buildings  
Pend Oreille County, 1920-1959

Year	County Average Values	
	Per Farm	Per Acre
1920	\$ 6,220	\$30.50
1930	4,820	26.00
1940	3,390	19.00
1950	10,600	43.00
1954	17,728	57.59
1959	25,140	67.48

Source: U. S. Census of Agriculture.

Farm Ownership and Tenure

A large proportion of the farmers in Pend Oreille County own the farm they operate. In 1959, the Census of Agriculture enumerated 284 full owners who accounted for 78 percent of all farm operators in the county. Individuals who owned farms operated about 61 percent of the total land in farms of Pend Oreille County in 1959. The high percentage of farm ownership indicates that many farms have remained in the families of the pioneers who established them and that many have preferred to buy land rather than rent it. This is reaffirmed by the Census which counted only 18 persons, about 5 percent of the farm operators, who leased entire farms in 1959. Leased farm acreage amounted to 4,897 during that year which constituted 4 percent of the county's total land in farms.

The number of part-owner farms in Pend Oreille County increased in the years prior to World War II to reach a high of 83 in 1945. Since 1945, part-owner operations decreased to 61 in 1959. In the part-owner system, a portion of a farm is owned and some of the land and/or buildings are rented. Many elderly people live in retirement on farms and contract part of their land to others. Many part-owner operations have resulted from the consolidation of two or more farms into larger units for more efficiency. Part-owners operated about 30 percent of Pend Oreille County's total agricultural acreage in 1959.

Only 3 Pend Oreille County farms were operated by individuals who managed land for others and were paid a wage or salary for their services in 1959. Manager-operated farms totaled 4,897 acres or 4 percent of the county's farmland in that year.

Table 12. Farm Tenancy, Number and Percent of Farms  
by Tenure of Operator, Pend Oreille County, 1925-1959

Year	Number of Farms	Full Owners		Part Owners		Managers		Tenants	
		Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
1925	505	438	86.7	12	2.4	2	.4	53	10.5
1930	613	491	80.1	44	7.2	17	2.8	61	9.9
1935	686	532	77.5	23	3.3	4	.6	127	18.5
1940	657	479	72.9	54	8.2	2	.3	122	18.6
1945	602	443	73.6	83	13.8	3	.5	73	12.1
1950	500	407	81.4	59	11.8	—	—	34	6.8
1954	461	367	79.6	67	14.5	3	.7	24	5.2
1959	366	284	77.6	61	16.7	3	.8	18	4.9

Source: U. S. Census of Agriculture.

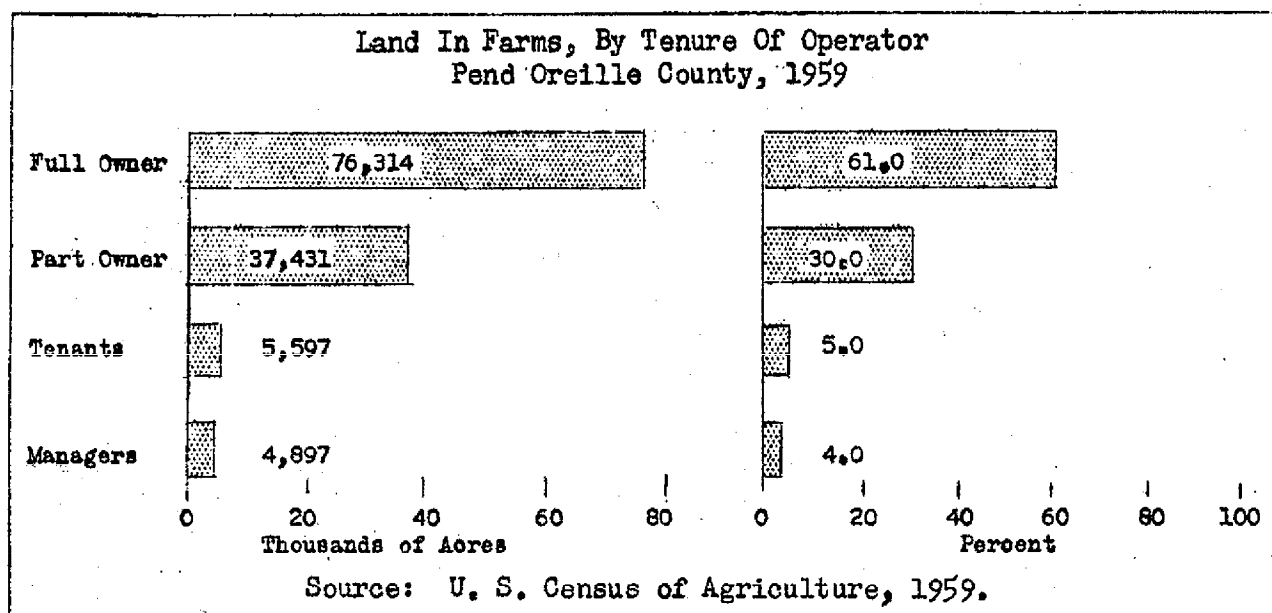


Figure 8. Land in Farms, By Tenure of Operator, Pend Oreille County, 1959.

### Irrigation

In 1959, Pend Oreille County's irrigated farmland amounted to 2,702 acres, according to the Census of Agriculture. The irrigated acreage represented only 2 percent of the county's total farmland. Irrigated farm acreage increased more than five and one-half times during the period from 1950 to 1954. Between 1954 and 1959, however, land irrigated was decreased about 20 percent. With a summer dry period in the area, irrigation becomes a valuable asset to farmers.

Farms which reported having some irrigated land in 1959 numbered 56, which is about 15 percent of all farms in Pend Oreille County. Crops were harvested from 1,824 acres of irrigated land on 45 farms during the year. The largest irrigated acreage in 1959 was devoted to alfalfa hay. Smaller acreages of other hays and small grain crops made up most of the irrigated croplands other than that in alfalfa.

Most of the county's irrigation is accomplished by sprinkler systems with the water coming from surface sources located on the farms. Others utilize water from wells on the farm or water from irrigation organization facilities.

Table 13. Irrigated Farms: Number and Acreage  
Pend Oreille County, 1950, 1954 and 1959

Item	1959	1954	1950
Number of irrigated farms	56	70	23
Land irrigated (acres)	2,702	3,392	600
Irrigated land in farms according to use:			
Farms irrigating crops	45	64	21
Acres of crops irrigated	1,824	2,673	444
Acres of other land irrigated	878	719	156

Source: U. S. Census of Agriculture

Farm Facilities

The capacity of farmer to produce is significantly related to the items of farm equipment and facilities at his command. The 366 farms of Pend Oreille County in 1959 were above state averages in items of farm equipment by which observers judge standards of farm operation. In terms of home conveniences such as telephones and home freezers, however, farms in the county fell short of the state average figures. About 39 percent of the farms had telephone service in 1959 while 55 percent enjoyed the convenience of a home freezer.

Tractors and automobiles are found on majority of Pend Oreille County farms. In 1959, nearly 84 percent of the farms reported a total of 609 tractors. The number of farms with automobiles was 288 which represented 76 percent of the total farms. Over 93 percent of the farms also had motor trucks in 1959. The importance of livestock and feed crops in the county is indicated by the relatively high percentage of farms with dairy equipment and hay and small grain harvesting machinery.

Table 14. Specified Facilities and Equipment on Farms  
Pend Oreille County, 1959

Facility or Equipment Item	Number of Farms Using	Percent of All Farms in County Equipped
Telephone .....	147	38.7
Home freezer .....	210	55.3
Milking machine .....	115	30.3
Electric milk cooler ...	84	22.1
Crop drier (for grain, forage or other crops)	2	.5
Power operated elevator, conveyor or blower ...	133	35.0
Grain combines .....	90	23.9
Pick-up baler .....	144	37.9
Field forage harvester .	23	6.1
Motortrucks .....	354	93.2
Tractors .....	318	83.7
Crawler tractors .....	147	38.7
Automobiles .....	288	75.8

Source: U. S. Census of Agriculture, 1959.

Farm Roads

Much progress has been made in providing all-weather roads for farm families in the county. About 39 percent of the farms were located on hard-surfaced roads in 1959. A little over 38 percent of the farmsteads were situated on improved roads of gravel, shell or shale. The remaining 23 percent of the farms required traveling over dirt roads in order to reach better roads. About 94 percent of the farms on dirt roads were located within 5 miles to a hard-surfaced road.

Table 15. Number of Farms, Land in Farms and Value of Livestock and Crops Sold Off Farms, Washington Counties - 1959

County	Number of Farms	All Land in Farms (acres)	Value of all Crops Sold Off Farms (dollars)	Value of all Livestock and their Products Sold Off Farms (dollars)
Adams	786	1,076,960	21,055,532	3,547,300
Asotin	325	364,405	2,589,582	1,179,464
Benton	1,281	562,809	12,912,165	3,958,996
Chelan	1,636	215,646	16,877,563	660,083
Clallam	724	68,739	706,055	2,858,512
Clark	2,778	188,479	3,020,725	8,222,499
Columbia	333	359,134	9,778,027	1,148,786
Cowlitz	1,014	80,176	1,022,291	2,808,884
Douglas	935	1,012,561	12,985,276	1,067,743
Ferry	283	298,247	396,384	931,057
Franklin	742	590,027	10,305,160	3,596,711
Garfield	274	344,094	6,871,789	898,109
Grant	1,497	1,075,642	26,083,038	12,555,694
Grays Harbor	896	99,529	924,067	2,639,777
Island	493	38,702	515,863	1,909,572
Jefferson	266	35,123	212,568	758,107
King	2,952	114,719	6,240,212	14,298,190
Kitsap	906	29,776	437,819	1,374,547
Kittitas	905	580,035	2,961,833	10,945,370
Klickitat	741	960,614	3,859,102	3,083,797
Lewis	2,230	255,012	1,893,636	7,935,581
Lincoln	959	1,422,981	21,035,259	3,253,383
Mason	328	35,518	202,594	728,250
Okanogan	1,762	2,048,406	10,681,584	5,723,537
Pacific	499	53,348	819,224	1,086,617
PEND OREILLE	366	121,239	265,001	1,222,488
Pierce	2,535	153,363	4,928,685	10,850,000
San Juan	209	45,707	91,694	595,403
Skagit	1,740	141,770	6,722,958	9,167,984
Skamania	177	20,177	283,595	259,736
Snohomish	2,919	148,604	2,788,695	12,899,240
Spokane	2,990	822,008	15,091,158	8,403,816
Stevens	1,698	803,776	3,836,457	5,676,015
Thurston	1,220	142,170	1,952,408	5,836,930
Wahkiakum	302	26,299	174,415	1,052,642
Walla Walla	981	822,729	19,957,499	4,228,801
Whatcom	3,151	185,045	3,943,630	17,706,625
Whitman	1,824	1,485,709	43,632,434	7,398,484
Yakima	6,010	1,884,694	75,760,207	32,919,536
State Total	51,577	18,716,972	353,816,184	215,388,266

Source: U. S. Census of Agriculture, 1959.